

SAN DIEGO BUSINESS JOURNAL

INNOVATION | A look at innovative organizations, concepts, products and people

Firm Speaks the Right Languages To Build Complicated Websites

SOFTWARE: Bytes Helps Innovative Companies Get Products to Market

■ By TOM YORK

Need a new surfboard made to order? No worries, dude.

You can design and order that dream board online, thanks to software written by **Bytes Inc.** for **ShapeLogic LLC** and now licensed to **Firewire Surfboard LLC**, an Australian company with a facility in Encinitas.

Bytes, which provides custom software consulting services to its clients, wrote bits and pieces of the browser-based application that allows customers to order boards to their exact specifications.

Indeed, Firewire's customers can adjust the shape of the nose and tail, as well as the width and thickness of the board, at the website.

Bytes President and CEO **Sanjiv Prabhakaran** says the project was all in a day's work for his privately held company.

The business specializes in using such obscure languages as **Microsoft Corp.**'s ASP.net software to build complicated websites, especially those requiring large databases and other bells and whistles.

"There are innovators who design new products that have cutting-edge technology," Prabhakaran said. "In a professional service such as ours, innovation is achieved in many different ways.

"For example, if a company has a software product, but needs to add extensions, they can do it internally, or reach out to outside people who have skills that can help them put those ideas in their product," he said.

"Often, our customers have a general idea of what they want, and we have a team who comes in and helps them, coming up with a solution that can help get them to market in short order," Prabhakaran said.

Bytes' work enables Firewire customers

BYTES INC.

President and CEO: Sanjiv Prabhakaran.

Financial information: Not available.

No. of local employees: Six.

Investors: Self-funded.

Headquarters: Carmel Valley.

Year founded: 2002.

What makes the company innovative:

It looks for ways to make state-of-the-art software products for clients. The company translates high-level ideas or applications, using appropriate architecture and specifications, innovative products and services.

Key factors for success: Taking clients' ideas for new products and services and translating them into software.

to store their personal information at the site, as well as store detailed data on up to five board designs.

"They (Bytes) were great," said **Bruce Pettibone**, founder of ShapeLogic in San Diego, who says he is now finalizing another contract with Bytes.

Pettibone, whose privately held business offers possibly the only 3-D modeling available that can be used live on the Internet, met Prabhakaran by chance at a San Diego Software Industries Council meeting.

"I had a problem to solve, and when I asked someone at the meeting if they knew anything about the problem, Sanjiv was the only one to raise his hand," Pettibone said.

Positive testimonials are commonplace for the Indian-born software engineering guru, who has six employees locally, plus contracts with up to 20 contractors with other companies located in remote sites around the planet.

He worked in Silicon Valley before coming to San Diego in 2002 to work for now-defunct **Bay Logics Inc.**, which wanted to use him to take its commercial real estate asset management services for such clients as **Sears**, **Staples** and **Starbucks** to the Internet.



Photo courtesy of Bytes Inc.

Bytes President and CEO Sanjiv Prabhakaran says innovation is achieved in a variety of ways. His company's custom software is tailored to clients' needs.

When Bay Logics closed after the economy slowed dramatically in the wake of the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, Prabhakaran launched Bytes, offering custom software development.

Getting to the Next Level

"We help people come out with new products," Prabhakaran said. "And in the process, (we) help them get to the next level."

Bytes worked closely with San Diego entrepreneur **Michael Hawthorne** to develop **ActiveAdjunct.com**, a now-defunct website that colleges and universities could use to find and hire adjunct instructors for their campuses.

"He helped us immensely because of his expertise," Hawthorne said. "Because of his unique perspective, he was able to point out some aspects on the back end of the site in terms of security and our database that we hadn't thought about."

Tom York is a contributing editor for the San Diego Business Journal.